

## Hope for the Discouraged and Depressed, Part 5 - Romans 8:18-21 – April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012

- Today's teaching will be part five of a series titled; "Hope for the Discouraged and Depressed." Actually, it's very rare to have a five part series.
- However, this chapter here in Romans is such that the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul gets down to the Nitty-gritty stuff of the Christian life.
- Namely, at least as it relates to our study today, it's the sufferings in our Christian life, the expectation of, and frustration with of our Christian life.

- In other words, God's Word will hit these issues head on, and straight up in the sense that it deals with the everyday struggles of our daily lives.
- In verse 18, it speaks to our present sufferings, verse 19 speaks to our future expectations, and verses 20-21, speaks to our past frustrations.
- The common denominator with all three of these is that in spite of it all, we can find hope and encouragement even in the midst of our struggles.

### 1. Our suffering is worth it (Verse 18)

(18) I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

- v18 Paul makes what is arguably a daring claim saying, he's concluded our present sufferings aren't worthy to be compared with future glory.
- Some translations will render verse eighteen as Paul saying; "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared."
- While this isn't a word we use very often today, it does carry with it the idea that he's done an appraisal on it and there are no comps for it.

Charles Spurgeon - "Here the rule of proportion is calmly applied, and by heavenly arithmetic it is shown that our present griefs are hardly worth a thought, for eternal glory so infinitely transcends them. Blessed be the Lord God of our salvation forever and ever. Amen."

- One might argue that while knowing what awaits us in glory yet future does give us hope, that hope can give way to despair when it's too far off.
- Then there's Proverbs 13:12, which doesn't help at all when it says; "hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life."
- This begs the question of how can it be possible to find hope in our present sufferings if we have to wait until our future glory is revealed in us.

One commentator answered it best this way; "Paul says that the pathway to future glory, for us, as it was for Jesus, must lie through present suffering. To which the obvious question is: Is it worth it? Does future glory outweigh present suffering? Is it worth following this costly path? Paul considers, (which indicates a measured thoughtful conclusion), that it is worth it. ...The sum total of human suffering in this age is like dust in the scales by comparison with that future glory. This claim is so massive that he embarks on a cosmic proof [by taking] men and women mired in the maze of incomprehensible suffering and gives us an aerial view, so that we see where it leads."

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NIV (16) Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. (17) For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. (18) So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

William Newell - "In constant view of that glory to be revealed in and through the Church, the sufferings which God called the saints to go through, no matter what they were, seemed as nothing."

### 2. Our waiting is worth it (Verse 19)

(19) The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

- v19 Paul writes that the whole creation waits in eager expectation for that glorious time, yet future, when the sons of God are to be revealed.
- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that it's speaking collectively of the whole creation eagerly expecting this.
- There is coming a day, though we must wait for this day, when not only will future glory be revealed in us, it will be revealed in glory that it is us.

William Newell – The world knows nothing of this astonishing verse. All the saints should always have it in remembrance! ...Here God tells us unto what creation is coming—for what it is waiting: "earnestly." Whether inanimate things on earth (for even the rocks and hills shall sing for joy shortly!) or whether the moving creatures on earth or sea; or whether, may we say, the hosts on high—all are waiting in expectation for that "unveiling of the sons of God."

1 John 3:1-2 KJV (1) Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

### 3. Our frustration is worth it (Verses 20-21)

(20) For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope (21) that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

- v20 Paul writes how that the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope.
- v21 He goes on to say the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the sons of God.
- Paul will, by the Holy Spirit, expound on this being subjected to frustration in the following verses, which Lord willing we'll get to study next week.

- Be that as it may, and suffice it to say, there's something here that I think we would be grossly remiss were we not to take a closer look at it.
- Notice that this frustration that we are subject to is not by our own choosing, but by God's choosing in that it is His will to subject us to this.
- I'm keenly aware how at first glance this can be deemed unfair however frustration or emptiness if you will is the very thing that brings us to Him.

- Let me explain, tribulation and frustration are what fuel our eager expectation of that future salvation in glory as we, in hope, look to and for God.
- These are the very things that point me, perhaps better said, drive me to the only one Who can satisfy the longing groaning of my hurting soul.
- Dare I say that in some way this was all by God's design? It was Pascal who said that there's a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man.

- In other words, God designed me, and made me for Him, so that I would come to Him. This is how and where I will bring it in for a close today.
- Simply said, even though I've suffered presently, am frustrated persistently, and waited patiently, soon and very soon, it will have been worth it.
- So say to your discouraged heart and worried mind, my soul, wait silently for God alone for my expectation and hope is from Him. (Psalms 62:5)

Psalms 42:5 NKJV Why are you cast down, O my soul? And *why* are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him *For* the help of His countenance.